

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph and heading at lines 12-15 on page 1 with the following amended paragraph and headings:

FIELD OF THE INVENTION ~~**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**~~

The present invention relates generally to line aggregating techniques, and particularly to a packet transmitting and receiving techniques for providing improved communications availability.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please replace the paragraph on page 13, lines 27-28 with the following amended paragraph:

In the present embodiment, the multiple line receiving unit 23 illustrated in ~~Fig. 10~~ Fig. 9 further comprises a receiving line switching unit 50.